

30 November 1979

STATINTL

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

FROM :   
PB/NSC Coordination Staff

SUBJECT : Congressman Hansen on Iran, the Students and  
the Hostages

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1. Congressman George Hansen (R., Idaho) met this morning for 50 minutes with a small group of students and faculty at Georgetown's School of Foreign Service to discuss his trip to Iran. Here are the highlights of what Hansen said:

- the Students' Objectives: The students are using their control over the hostages and the US Embassy "to get a hold on the government". They respect Khomeini and the Revolutionary Council, but they have their own position to protect." Hansen also said that the students feel "they are not getting through to the US Government. What they want is for us to review our policy toward Iran, admit past mistakes, and they see none of this happening. They definitely plan to hold trials as a means of forcing us to introspection about Iran. Then, they said, they will let the hostages go."
- Organization: Hansen was very impressed with the students' ability to control the crowd around the Embassy. When he came out of the compound, Hansen said the crowd started shouting "Yankee, go home. But then a student leader signaled for the crowd to stop and said that Iran was not against the American people. The student said the crowd should chant: 'Carter no; people yes' and this was done. The student also said that no more US flags should be burned and those in the crowd preparing to do this stopped."
- the Revolutionary Council: Hansen said "Our actions appear to them as just posturing, especially as far as the UN is concerned. They think the UN is dominated by us and so will boycott it." Hansen discussed his idea of holding hearings with Bani-Sadr "who took it to the Revolutionary Council. Bani-Sadr said the Council reacted very positively to this idea. They said it would show that the US was being introspective about the situation in Iran and that this would appeal to the students who are offended at our quid pro quo approach."

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- The hostages are referred to as "prisoners" by the students and by those in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who are holding the Charge and two others. Hansen said the place where he met with 19 hostages at the Embassy was called an "interrogation center" by the students. When Hansen asked why the hostages' hands were bound, his student escort said "because otherwise we would have to stand over them with a weapon."
- If the Shah leaves the US, Hansen believes this would create an "immediate trauma for the students. But it may only be temporary. They would then look for new demands (to justify their continuing to hold the hostages").

2. Hansen said that yesterday he found "a tremendous response on the Hill" to his call for hearings. "Congress is beginning to get pressure from mothers and the families to do something that might help to ease the situation." Hansen thinks that such constituent pressure will grow over the next several weeks and appeared fully convinced both that hearings would be held and that this would be interpreted as a positive gesture by the Revolutionary Council. He was unsure about the students' response but believes such hearings will help reduce the risk that the hostages would be mistreated. Hansen implied throughout that the hostages would eventually be released.



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